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Redevelopment Board Minutes 10/25/2004

Arlington Redevelopment Board
Minutes of October 25, 2004

Members Present: Ed Tsoi
Barry Faulkner
Roly Chaput
Lynne Lowenstein
Nora Mann at 8:40

Also Present: Kevin J. O'Brien, Secretary ex officio

Ed Tsoi called the meeting to order at 8:05. Kevin O'Brien asked that the Board increase the contract with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority in order to have a little more of Joe Tulumieri's time and in order be able to use Gary Hebert of Faye Spoffard and Thorndike during the special permit process. Roland Chaput moved that the Board rescind its motion of September 7, 2004, regarding a contract increase and instead increase part A of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority contract to \$60,000 and to increase part B of the contract to \$60,000. Lynne Lowenstein seconded the motion and the Board voted 4 – 0 in favor.

Kevin O'Brien then asked the Board to increase VHB's contract to cover extra work that Craig Seymour was asked to do during Town Meeting. Roland Chaput moved and Lynne Lowenstein seconded the motion to increase VHB's contract to \$354,825. The Board voted 4 – 0 in favor.

The Board discussed the proposed Green Line MBTA extension to Medford.

Ed Tsoi next introduced Jake Upton from Symmes Redevelopment Associates (SRA) to provide an update on the Symmes project. Jake Upton reported that he was concerned about the zoning because of the last minute amendment made on Town Meeting floor. His attorneys were having difficulty with the language and advised that he would have difficulty obtaining financing because of it. Jake Upton explained that he was in negotiation with the Marino Center and with Lahey Clinic for occupancy of the medical office building. Marino would occupy close to 40,000 s.f. but Lahey would occupy only 25,000 s.f.. Jake Upton anticipated bringing updated plans to the Board soon and refining them to be able to apply for a special permit in January. Kevin O'Brien encouraged SRA to apply for the special permit sooner.

The Board next dealt with the Symmes Neighborhood Advisory Committee (SNAC). Terry Dash of the existing neighborhood group reported that they had received five applicants for the SNAC: Sandi Borgeois. Terry Dash, Elaine Duffy, Greg Jackmauh, and Paul Morrison. After a short discussion Nora Mann moved that the Board endorse the list provided and appoint the five applicants to the SNAC. Roland Chaput seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve the motion. Ed Tsoi then moved that Terry Dash be appointed to call the first meeting of the SNAC. Lynne Lowenstein seconded the motion and it carried 5 to 0.

Terry Dash indicated that the SNAC would first make comment on the draft Neighborhood Protection Plan, but indicated that it would be difficult to get neighborhood input and make meaningful comments within a short period of time.

At the behest of Nora Mann, the Board once again discussed the difficulties posed by the so-called "Worden Amendment" to the change in zoning for the Symmes property.

Ed Tsoi explained that there was a proposal to expand the Pleasant Street Historic District such that it would include two Redevelopment Board properties, 23 Maple St. and the Central School building. Richard Duffy and Joanne Robinson, co-chairs of the Historical Commission, joined the discussion and asked the Board's support. Roland Chaput moved that the ARB support the expansion of the Pleasant Street Historic District as proposed. Lynne Lowenstein seconded the motion and the Board voted 5 – 0 in favor.

Ed Starr, chair of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) reported to the Board about projects that the TAC is undertaking.

He expressed the desire to work closely with the ARB and meet regularly.

Ed Tsoi asked staff to check the signage at Leader Bank on Massachusetts Avenue at Medford Street to see if it complies with the bylaw.

Kevin O'Brien was asked to write a letter of support to Mass. EOEa for the project proposed for Symmes by Symmes Redevelopment Associates and subject to MEPA review.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Kevin O'Brien